

# Comprehension

*'...creating strategic, independent and thoughtful readers..'*

Harcourt Valley PS & Newstead PS

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# Effective literacy teaching

Teachers must have:

- Knowledge about literacy learning and the literacy curriculum
- Knowledge about the learners
- Knowledge of instructional strategies
- Knowledge of learning models
- High expectations of all students

# What is comprehension?

## Turn and talk

- a strategy which enables all students to participate in discussion....everyone has a chance to share their ideas, thoughts and opinions in a 'safe' forum.  
(partners can be permanent or flexible)

**Comprehension is not something that happens after reading. Comprehension is the thinking we do before, during and after reading.**

*Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell*

How do we help our students to think when they read?

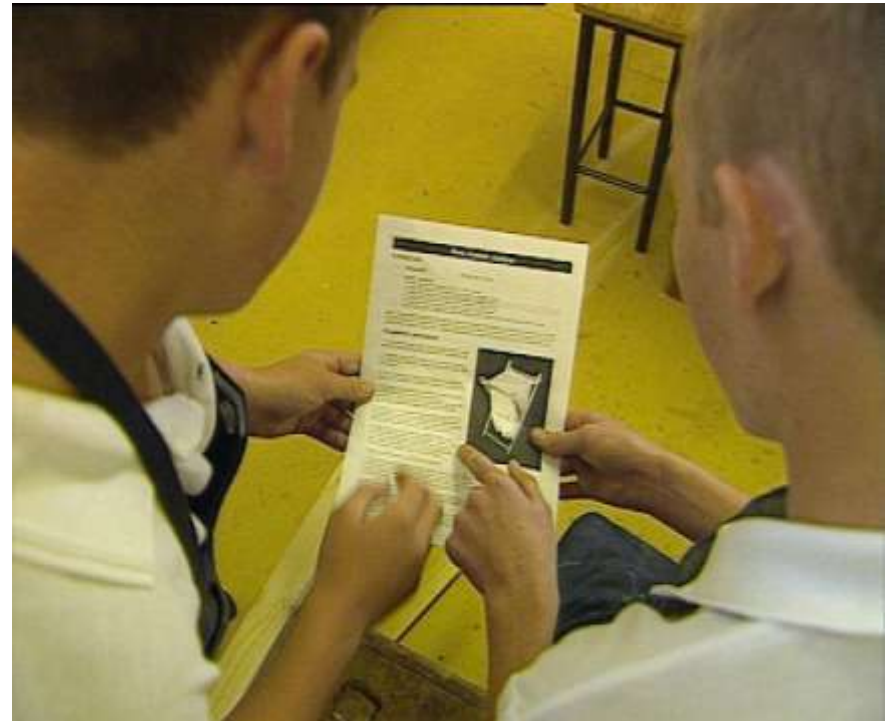
Comprehension is impacted by the student's ability to automatically decode, their vocabulary knowledge, their fluency and their schema (or prior knowledge).

Background knowledge plays a huge role in reading comprehension.

We need to teach students strategies for reading texts which they can use independently.

# Readers build understanding by

- predicting / inferring
- asking questions
- connecting / comparing
- visualising
- determining importance
- monitoring / clarifying
- synthesising and summarising
- knowing how words work



Every reader brings a different background knowledge to a text, therefore their levels of comprehension will vary. Not every student will 'get' the same information or 'have' the same experience from a piece of text.

# Just like



Character: Eeyore		Text: Christopher Robin	
Character traits	Like myself	Like someone I know	Like another character
lovable		(mum)	(Winnie)
gloomy			(Neil)
grateful			
quiet		(Ryan)	

How does this help me to understand what I am reading?

Making  
connections

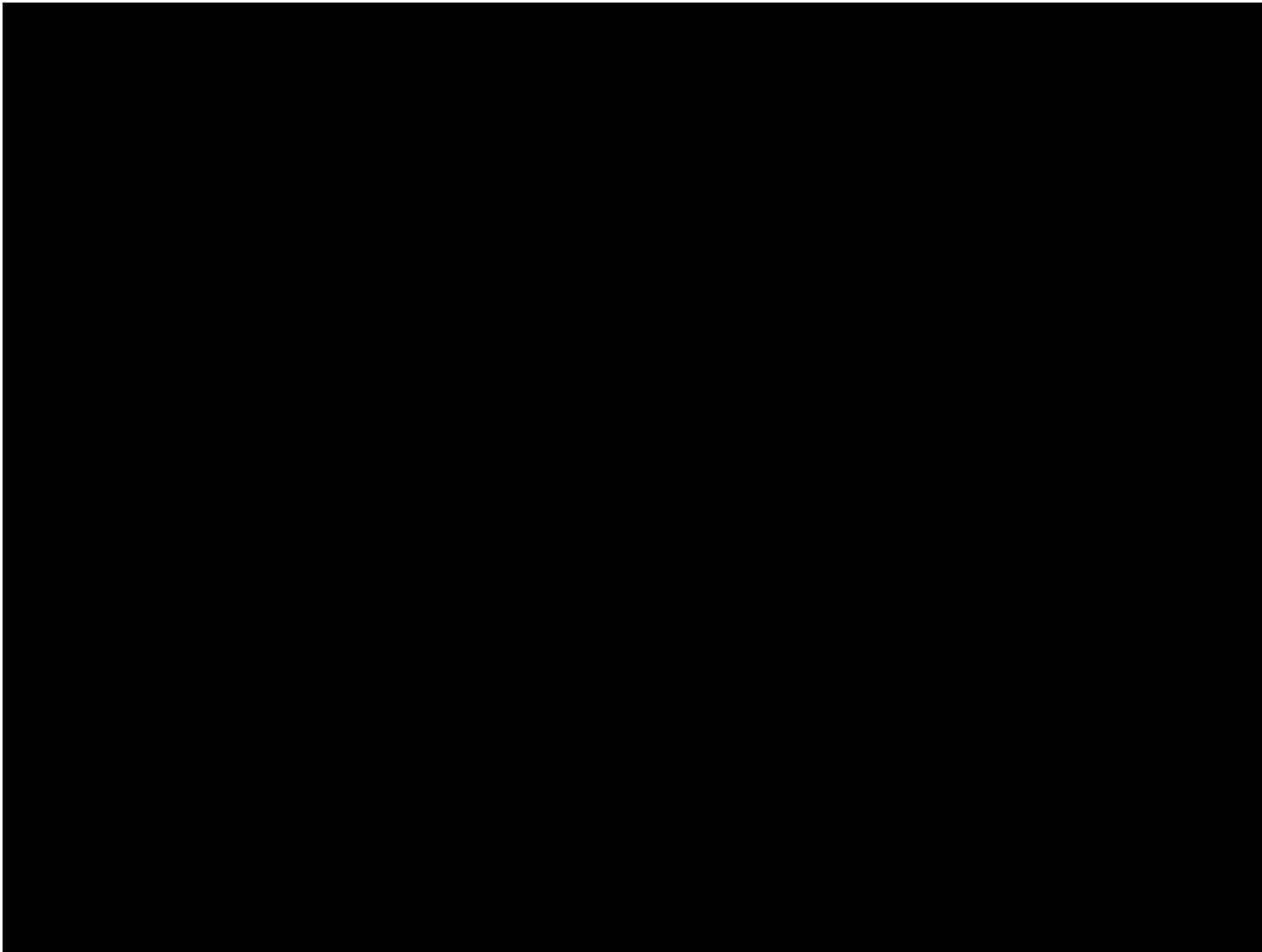


# Venn diagram (*My Grandma*)

Grandma	Same	Me
Brown eyes	Wrinkles around eyes	Blue eyes
3 children & 6 grandchildren	Likes playing games	2 children & 1 grandchild
Good cook	Cooks with grandchildren	'Closet' good cook
Park every day	Has a dog	Irregular walks
Little, flowers	garden	Big, no flowers yet
Regular Library borrower	Loves reading	One time borrower
	Acts out story	
School on Mondays		'stolen' visits to school
	love	

How does this help me to understand what I am reading?

Compare  
and contrast

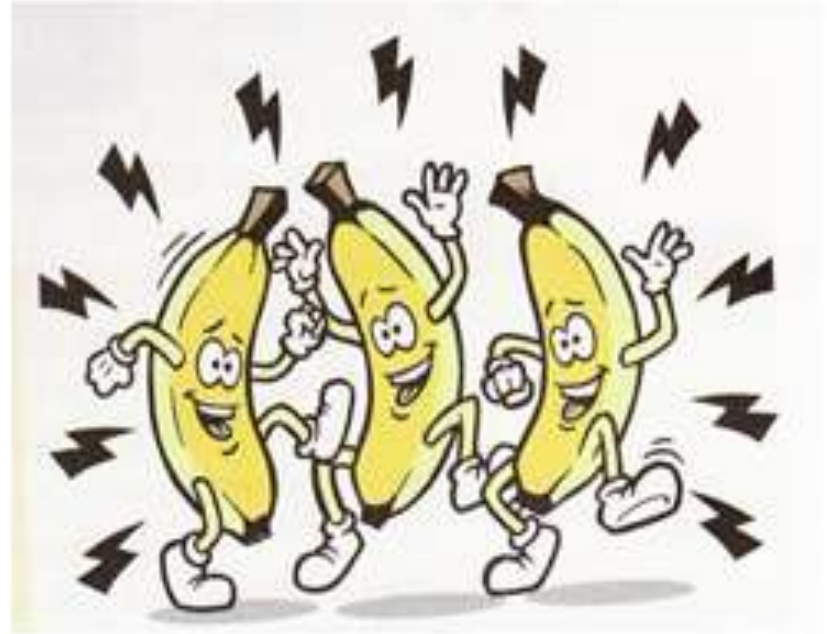


# Sunday Chutney

How does this help me to understand what I am reading?

Using  
schema  
and  
inferring

**Bananas -  
full of  
energy!!**



How does this help me to understand what I am reading?

Predicting

Every year, thousands of tonnes of bananas grown on Queensland banana farms are wasted. Because they are too small, too bent, or too blemished, they are either fed to cattle or left to rot.

University of Queensland scientists have been working on a way to use this waste to create electricity. The thought of powering your house on banana waste may sound a little unrealistic, but, two years ago, UQ researcher, Associate Professor Bill Clarke, proved it was a possibility.

Between 2004 and 2005 Dr Clarke, supported by the Queensland Government through the Queensland Sustainable Energy Innovation Fund (QSEIF), Ergon Energy, and The Australian Banana Growers' Association Inc., uncovered the potential to produce energy from banana waste.

"We demonstrated in 2004-2005 that waste bananas and stalk material within the banana bunch are a great source of methane," Dr Clarke said. "There are no technical problems with producing methane from bananas."

The idea is to mix the bananas in a large steel drum with bacteria. After a couple of days the bananas break down and produce a gas, which drives a turbine to create electricity.

. "Methane is produced by loading the bananas into an air tight reactor, with careful control of pH and, ideally, temperature. Biogas is the combination of methane and carbon dioxide and is the name given to fuel derived from organic matter."

The technology to make this green power already exists; the main question is whether it is economical. "However, for the process to be economically viable, we need to develop a cheaper and simpler digester compared to those that are currently used for organic waste in Europe."

If it is cheap enough, the green electricity produced could be used directly on banana farms, or fed back into the state's main power grid.

"The biogas can either be stored at moderate pressure, possibly for use as a transportation fuel, or directed to a gas engine to generate electricity, as is currently done in Australia at a number of landfills."

(taken from: *The power of bananas revealed*, UQ NEWS, Published: 14 January 2008) |

Instruction is powerful only when it is sufficiently precise and focused to build directly on what students already know and to take them to the next level. While a teacher does and must do many things, the most critical is designing and organising instruction so that it is focused.

Without focus, instruction is inefficient and students spend too much time on completing activities that are too easy and do not involve new learning or too little time on tasks that are too difficult and involve too much new learning or relearning.

*Breakthrough, Fullan, Hill & Crevola, 2006*

# What explicit questions and directions make a difference?

- How does this help you become a better reader?
- How does this help you understand what you are reading?
- How could you use this in other reading?
- When you are reading today (and for the rest of your life), I want you to practice using this strategy and think about how it is helping you become a better reader.



# Gradual release of responsibility model

MODELLED READING READ ALOUD	SHARED READING	GUIDED READING	INDEPENDENT READING
STUDENT			
<p>Teacher explicitly instructs students in reading skills and strategies.</p> <p>Teacher explicitly models use of skills and strategies using short pieces of text.</p> <p>Teacher thinks aloud while modelling use of skills and strategies.</p> <p>Students listen carefully to teacher thinking.</p>	<p>Teacher and students share a text.</p> <p>Teacher and students read together OR teacher acts as voice while students read along.</p> <p>Teacher and students discuss use of reading skills and strategies.</p>	<p>Teacher and a small group of students read, talk and think their way through a text together.</p> <p>Teacher strategically selects text to support the group.</p> <p>Students reflect on how the strategy or skill will support their future reading.</p>	<p>Students select appropriate texts for independent reading.</p> <p>Students apply strategies in their reading.</p> <p>Teacher provides feedback and scaffolding for f</p>
TEACHER			
I DO YOU WATCH	I DO YOU HELP	YOU DO I HELP	YOU DO I WATCH

Based on Gradual Release of Responsibility Model (Pearson and Gallagher, 1982)

# Effective reading session

Whole class	Independent or group	Whole class
Mini lesson Modelling a strategy Demonstration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Independent reading</li> <li>•Individual conference</li> <li>•Response to reading</li> <li>•Small group focussed teaching:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖Oral language</li> <li>❖Read aloud</li> <li>❖Shared reading</li> <li>❖Guided reading</li> <li>❖Reciprocal reading</li> <li>❖Literature circles</li> <li>❖Book clubs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Reflection Share time
20%	60%	20%

# Reading strategies

Effective readers know about and use...

- ▶ **Comprehension -** I understand what I read.
- ▶ **Accuracy -** I can read the words.
- ▶ **Fluency –** I can read accurately, with expression, and I understand what I read
- ▶ **Expanding vocabulary -** I know, find and can use interesting words



# The Literacy CAFE Menu

<b>Comprehension</b> I understand what I read	<b>Accuracy</b> I can read the words	<b>Fluency</b> I can read accurately, with expression, and understand what I read	<b>Expand Vocabulary</b> I know, find, and use interesting words
<p><i>Strategies</i></p> <p>Check for understanding</p> <p>Back up and reread</p> <p>Monitor and fix up</p> <p>Retell the story</p> <p>Use prior knowledge to connect with text</p> <p>Make a picture or mental image</p> <p>Ask questions throughout the reading process</p> <p>Predict what will happen; use text to confirm</p> <p>Infer and support with evidence</p> <p>Use text features (titles, headings, captions, graphic features)</p> <p>Summarize text; include sequence of main events</p> <p>Use main idea and supporting details to determine importance</p> <p>Determine and analyze author's purpose and support with text</p> <p>Recognize literacy elements (genre, plot, character, setting, problem/resolution, theme)</p> <p>Recognize and explain cause-and-effect relationships</p> <p>Compare and contrast within and between text</p>	<p><i>Strategies</i></p> <p>Cross checking . . . Do the pictures and/or words look right? Do they sound right? Do they make sense?</p> <p>Use the pictures . . . Do the words and pictures match?</p> <p>Use beginning and ending sounds</p> <p>Blend sounds; stretch and reread</p> <p>Flip the sound</p> <p>Chunk letters and sounds together</p> <p>Skip the word, then come back</p> <p>Trade a word/guess a word that makes sense</p>	<p><i>Strategies</i></p> <p>Voracious reading</p> <p>Read appropriate-level texts that are a good fit</p> <p>Reread text</p> <p>Practice common sight words and high-frequency words</p> <p>Adjust and apply different reading rates to match text</p> <p>Use punctuation to enhance phrasing and prosody (end marks, commas, etc.)</p>	<p><i>Strategies</i></p> <p>Voracious reading</p> <p>Tune in to interesting words and use new vocabulary in speaking and writing</p> <p>Use pictures, illustrations, and diagrams</p> <p>Use word parts to determine the meaning of words (prefixes, suffixes, origins, abbreviations, etc.)</p> <p>Use prior knowledge and context to predict and confirm meaning</p> <p>Ask someone to define the word for you</p> <p>Use dictionaries, thesauruses, and glossaries as tools</p>

## Behaviors That Support Reading

Get started right away   Stay in one place   Work quietly   Read the whole time   Increase stamina   Select and read good-fit books